

My first two months as the DDA Director have been busy and gratifying. I have traveled throughout the State to meet with people, families, advocates, agency staff and other stakeholders. I have heard success stories, observed innovative practices, and been updated on a variety of issues and concerns.

We are working at DDA to improve communication with our varied customers including people, families and providers. We will be posting a survey on the web site regarding customer service. I hope you will take the time to respond to the survey, as each person's input is crucial in assisting us as we move forward.

As you may know, employment for people with disabilities remains one of the Administration's primary goals. We are continuing our collaboration with stakeholders including self-advocates, providers, and other state agencies to develop and promote employment. To that effect, I am pleased to share that Maryland will be the site of the Alliance for Full Participation Summit 2.0: Real Jobs--It's Everyone's Business, to be held November 17-19, 2011 at the Gaylord National Harbor in Prince George's County. For more information on the Summit, please visit, www.allianceforfullparticipation.org/summit-2011. This is a wonderful opportunity for all stakeholders to attend a national conference close to home. I hope that you will consider attending the Summit so that Maryland can continue to be a leader in employment practices. DDA staff including myself will be attending this exciting event.